



Focus

Recycling Facts & Trivia

Facts

Glass

- Most bottles and jars contain at least 25% recycled glass. Source: The Earth Works Group Recycler's Handbook

Cans

- In 1996, Americans recycled 63.5% of the 99 billion aluminum cans produced. Source: "Recycling and Buy Recycled Fact Sheets" America Recycles Day
- In 1993, Americans recycled 59.5 billion aluminum cans, 3 billion more than in 1991, and raised the national aluminum can recycling rate to 2 out of every 3 cans. Aluminum can recycling saves 95% of the energy needed to make aluminum from bauxite ore. Energy savings in 1993 alone were enough to light a city the size of Pittsburgh for 6 years. Source: Can Manufacturing Institute

Paper

- By recycling 1 ton of paper you save: 17 trees; 6,953 gallons of water; 463 gallons of oil; 587 pounds of air pollution; 3.06 cubic yards of landfill space; and 4077 Kilowatt hours of energy. Source: Weyerhaeuser
- Today, 62 million newspapers will be printed in the U.S., and 44 million will be thrown away. That means the equivalent of about 500,000 trees will be dumped into landfills this week. Source: The Earth Works Group Recycler's Handbook

Plastic

- Americans use 4 million plastic bottles every hour! – yet only 1 bottle out of 4 is recycled. Source: 50 Simple Things Kids Can Do to Recycle. Earthworks Group
- If you lined up all the polystyrene foam cups made in just one day, they would circle the earth. Source: 50 Simple Things Kids Can Do to Recycle. Earthworks Group

Misc.

- Every year we dispose of 24 million tons of leaves and grass clippings, which could be composted to conserve landfill space. Source: 1996 Environmental Defense Fund

How Can Recycling Help Endangered Salmon?

The salmon that live in the Pacific Northwest are endangered for many reasons, including lower volumes of water in streams, pollution and soil run-off in the water. Recycling can help save our salmon and humans because the production of many recycled products uses less water and less energy, thus allowing higher volumes of water in streams. Recycling also creates less pollution than the production of products from virgin materials.

Preventing waste and recycling also reduce the demand for trees, preserving forests that absorb water, produce shade, and hold soil in place.

Myths & Facts

Myth: We can recycle only 25 to 30% of our solid wastes.

Fact: 25% was considered a maximum level in 1985. Today it should be considered a minimum, not a maximum as some states have already exceeded 40%.

Myth: Landfills and incinerators are more cost-effective and environmentally sound than recycling options.

Fact: Recycling programs, when designed properly, are cost-competitive with landfills and incinerators, and provide net pollution prevention benefits. Recycling materials not only avoids the pollution that would be generated through landfilling and incinerating these, but also reduces the environmental burden of virgin materials extraction and manufacturing processes.

Myth: Landfills are significant job generators for rural communities.

Fact: Recycling, where instituted, creates many more jobs for rural and urban communities than landfill and incineration disposal options. *Source: Institute for Local Self-reliance, Washington, DC*

For more information call 1-800-RECYCLE

Ecology is an equal-opportunity agency. If you have special accommodation needs, contact Michelle Payne at (360) 407-6129 (Voice) or (360) 407-6006 (TDD).